JOSHUA WILLIAMSON
ANDREA MILANA
LEE LOUGHRIDGE
G.I. JOE
image
#09

ENERGON UNIVERSE

CODENAME:

G.I. JOE

[MISSION LOG [02.009.01]

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TELL BLUDD THAT I POLITELY DECLINE HIS INVITATION.
IS THIS THE SAME BLUDD THAT YOU SHOT IN THE BACK OF THE HEAD WHEN YOU ESCAPED THE PIT?
THE ONE AND THE SAME.
MAJOR BLUDD HIRED ME TO TRACK YOU DOWN.
BUT YOU'RE A HARD WOMAN TO LOCATE, BARONESS.
I EXPECTED YOU IN A WAR-TORN JUNGLE HUNTING THE MOST DANGEROUS GAME. OR STABBING SOMEONE IN THE BACK. OR ASSASSINATING A FOREIGN DIGNITARY.
BUT INSTEAD I FIND YOU PLAYING TOURIST IN PARIS. MOST SURPRISING, BUT HERE WE ARE.
AND HERE WE GO.
GOODBYE, RAPTOR!
BLUDD'S INVITATION WAS NOT A REQUEST...

IT'S A DEMAND.

WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH THE BIRDS?

I'M SURE YOU'VE HEARD OF ME...

THE GREAT BIRD OF PREY.

I'VE HUNTED ACROSS THE WORLD WITH MY TRAINED AVIARY.

NOPE. I DON'T KNOW YOU.

AND I KNOW EVERYONE!

ALL MY LIFE WAS ABOUT NUMBERS...

"THERE IS A REASON DEATH AND TAXES ARE A CONSTANT IN OUR LIVES...AND THEY WORKED TOGETHER TO MAKE MY LIFE MISERABLE.
"I WANTED TO BE FREE.
"AND I ALWAYS FELT A CONNECTION WITH BIRDS. ESPECIALLY THE ONES THAT HUNTED.
"AND AS I TRAINED THEM... I COULD SEE THEY WERE ALSO TRAINING ME.
"BUT IT WASN'T ENOUGH. I WANTED TO DO MORE. I WANTED TO HUNT WITH THEM, TOO."
SO, I PAID A GUY TO BUILD THIS SUIT.
BUT THESE KINDS OF UPGRADES AIN'T CHEAP.
THEN IT'S TOO BAD...

KRACK!
WE'RE GOING TO BREAK IT!
COVER GIRL, HELP GET MY PARENTS TO SAFETY.
I'LL DEAL WITH RAPTOR!
WILL YOU NOW?
SMACK!
MOVE! NOW!
IF YOU'RE THIS GREAT HUNTER...
WHY TOY WITH US LIKE THIS? WHY THE BIRD ATTACK?
BECAUSE THE JOB CALLED FOR CHAOS...
A DISTRACTION...
FOR WHAT?
ME.

G'DAY, LADIES.
BOOM!
SPT!
AH!
DAMN. I WAS AIMING FOR THE DOLL'S HEAD.
I'M STILL NOT QUITE USED TO THE CHANGE TO MY DEPTH PERCEPTION, Y'KNOW?
GOTTA GET A BIT CLOSER THIS TIME.
FREEZE!
DROP YOUR WEAPONS!

NOW!
OY, THIS IS GONNA BE FUN.
DROP YOUR WEAPONS OR WE WILL OPEN FIRE.
MY PARENTS HAVE FLED...
AND SO SHOULD WE.
NO...WE CAN'T...
IT'S BEEN A MINUTE SINCE I'VE BEEN ABLE TO TEST OUT MY CLOSE QUARTERS SKILLS.
STOP!
BLUDD AND RAPTOR ARE ONLY HERE BECAUSE OF YOU.
YOU CAN'T RUN FROM THIS.
TIME TO SHOW I STILL GOT IT.
BANG!
BANG!
BANG!
BANG!

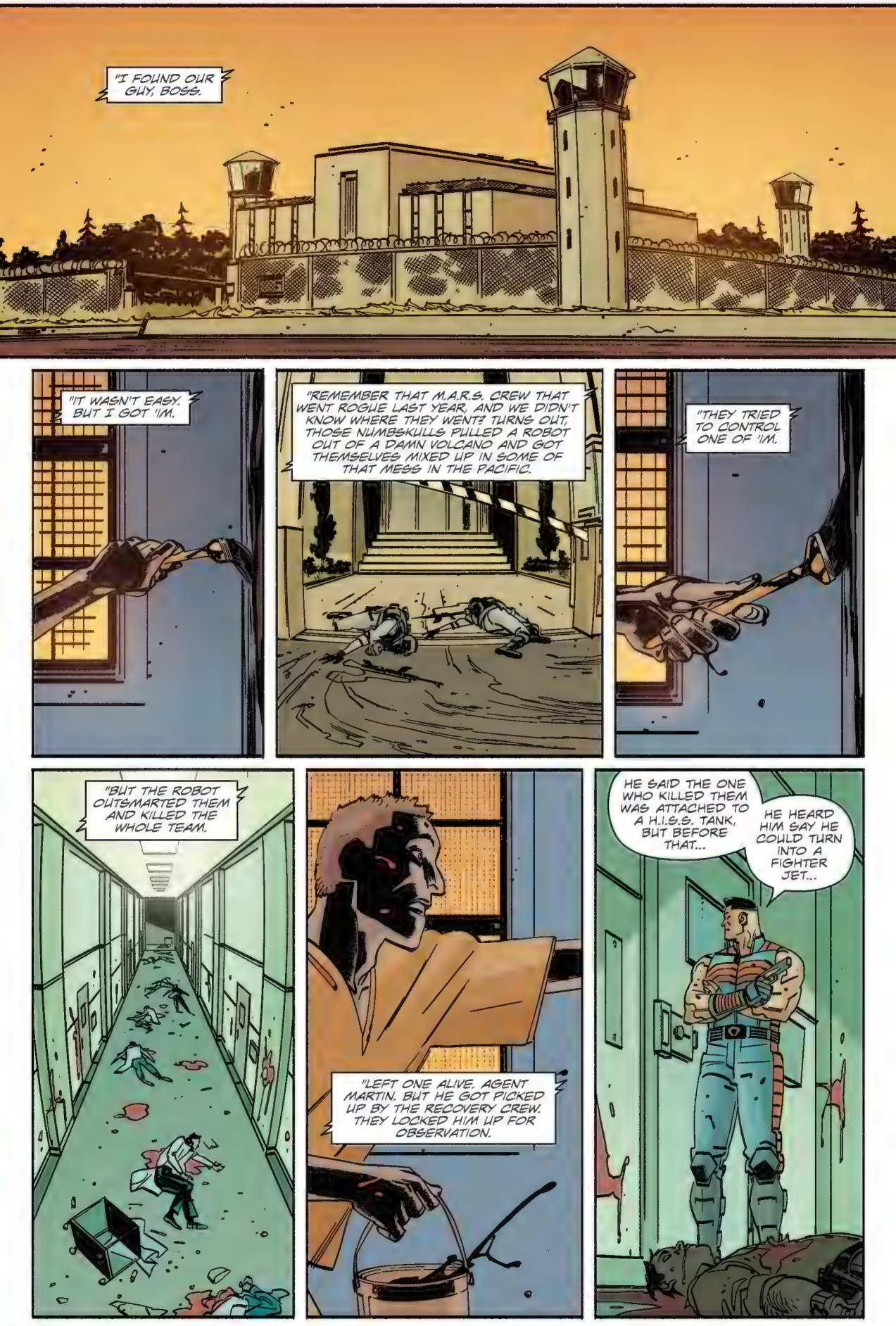
BOOM!
BOOM
BOOM
DIDN'T MISS THIS TIME.
WAIT, WAIT, WAIT... PLEASE DON'T.
I LOVE WHEN THEY BEG...

KOK!
ENOUGH, BLUDD!
POLICE
THAT'S THE LAST TIME YOU ATTACK ME FROM BEHIND, DOLL.
HOW ABOUT WE TRY FACE-TO-FACE?
YOU WANTED ME, YOU GOT ME.
DO YOU HAVE A PREFERENCE OF WHICH BODY PART YOU WANT TO LOSE THIS TIME?
POLICE
BECAUSE I HAVE SOME IDEAS...

AH!
SHOULD I FLY BARONESS AND COVER GIRL UP A MILE AND DROP 'EM?
NAH, THAT WOULD BE TOO EASY.
TAKE THEM TO THE SAFE HOUSE.

THE PIT.
YOUR OLD BUDDY IS ACTING A LITTLE WEIRD, DUKE.
CLUTCH?
YEAH, EVER SINCE HE GOT BACK FROM BEING UNDERCOVER WITH COBRA, HE'S BEEN ACTING...LIKE HE'S HIDING SOMETHING.
YOU DON'T KNOW HIM LIKE I DO, RISK. CLUTCH ISN'T SOME GOVERNMENT SPOOK.
"HE'S GOT NOTHING TO HIDE."
SO, YOUR PEOPLE ARE CALLED AUTOBOTS, AND YOUR ENEMIES ARE DECEPTICONS?
THAT IS CORRECT. OUR WAR BROUGHT US HERE BY ACCIDENT.
HAVE YOU BEEN ABLE TO CONTACT YOUR PEOPLE...THIS PRIME?
I HAVE NOT. MY TRANSPONDER MUST HAVE BEEN DAMAGED IN THE CRASH. I HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO CONTACT ANY AUTOBOTS. I DON'T EVEN KNOW IF THEY KNOW I AM ALIVE.
BUT I BELIEVE OPTIMUS PRIME WOULD BE SATISFIED WITH MY CURRENT MISSION IN AIDING YOU AGAINST THESE COBRA AGENTS YOU HAVE CONFLICT...WITH...

UGH...
YOU OKAY, HOUND? I THOUGHT WE GOT YOU ALL FIXED UP.
YOUR FRIEND DID A GOOD JOB, BUT I NEED MORE. I NEED ENERGON.
I'VE HAD NONE SINCE I EMERGED.
THEN WE'LL FIND YOU SOME.
AND I KNOW JUST THE SNAKES WHO HAVE IT.

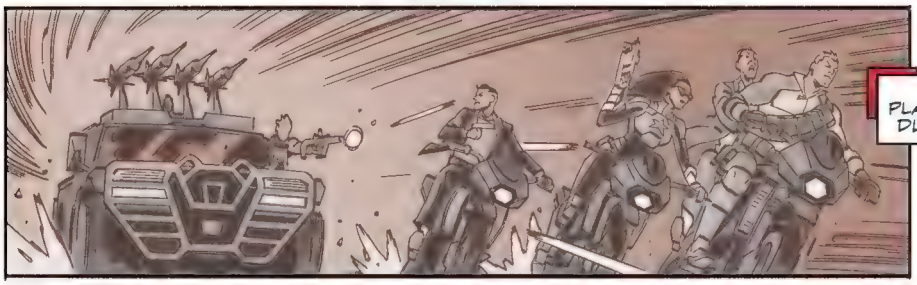

"I FOUND OUR GUY, BOSS.
"IT WASN'T EASY. BUT I GOT 'IM.
"REMEMBER THAT M.A.R.S. CREW THAT WENT ROGUE LAST YEAR, AND WE DIDN'T KNOW WHERE THEY WENT? TURNS OUT, THOSE NUMBSKULLS PULLED A ROBOT OUT OF A DAMN VOLCANO AND GOT THEMSELVES MIXED UP IN SOME OF THAT MESS IN THE PACIFIC.
"THEY TRIED TO CONTROL ONE OF 'IM.
"BUT THE ROBOT OUTSMARTED THEM AND KILLED THE WHOLE TEAM.
"LEFT ONE ALIVE. AGENT MARTIN. BUT HE GOT PICKED UP BY THE RECOVERY CREW. THEY LOCKED HIM UP FOR OBSERVATION.
HE SAID THE ONE WHO KILLED THEM WAS ATTACHED TO A H.I.S.S. TANK, BUT BEFORE THAT...
HE HEARD HIM SAY HE COULD TURN INTO A FIGHTER JET...

SAID ITS NAME WAS STARSCREAM.
A FIGHTER JET? THAT MATCHES THE DESCRIPTION THAT DUKE SAID KILLED HIS FRIEND.
THE ONE HE WAS SEARCHING FOR.
YOU GONNA TELL THE COMMANDER?
NO. THIS IS JUST FOR US.
BUT SPEAKING OF WHICH...
MAKE SURE AGENT MARTIN TELLS NO ONE ELSE WHAT HE SAW.
FIGURED.
BANG!

UGH... OW...
SOMEONE STITCHED UP MY SHOULDER...?
WHAT... WHERE ARE WE?
I DON'T KNOW.
BUT WE'RE HERE BECAUSE OF YOU.
WE HAD A WINDOW OF ESCAPE, AND YET WE STAYED TO... HELP STRANGERS. SHAMEFUL.
WE SHOULD HAVE LEFT WHEN WE HAD THE CHANCE.
THAT'S NOT WHAT A JOE WOULD DO, BARONESS.
I DID NOT WANT TO BE A JOE. UNLIKE YOU, I HAD NO CHOICE. IT WAS EITHER JOIN DUKE'S MAD PLAN OR BE LOCKED UP.
AND YET... I AM STILL LOCKED UP.
YOU'RE NOT WHO I THOUGHT YOU WERE.
WHEN YOU TALKED ABOUT YOUR PARENTS...I THOUGHT YOU ACTUALLY CARED ABOUT SOMEONE. ANYONE.
IF YOU WERE ANYTHING LIKE ME, WE WOULDN'T BE TRAPPED HERE!
GIRLS, GIRLS, GIRLS...

THERE WILL BE PLENTY OF TIME FOR A CAT FIGHT.
BLUDD, I KNOW YOU'RE ANGRY, BUT YOU MUST UNDERSTAND THAT MY ATTACK ON YOU AT THE PIT WAS A MATTER OF SELF-PRESERVATION.
YOU AND I ARE CUT FROM THE SAME CLOTH.
IS REVENGE REALLY NECESSARY?
OY, REVENGE IS GREAT, LOVE.
BUT IT PAYS JACK.

I LOOKED ALL OVER FOR YOU, DOLL. THEN I CAUGHT WIND OF YOU IN THE ODDEST OF PLACES...


"WASHINGTON, D.C. PLAYING GOOD GUY WITH DUKE AND HIS PEOPLE.

"I EVEN TRIED TO DRAW YOU OUT A FEW TIMES."

IN MY TRAVELS TO FIND YOU, I DISCOVERED SOMETHING SPECIAL.
NOW, I WAS FULLY INTENT ON EXECUTING YOU.
BUT I LEARNED THAT I WAS FAR FROM YOUR ONLY ENEMY.

YOU'VE MADE QUITE A FEW OVER THE YEARS, BARONESS.
AND THEY WOULD ALL WILLINGLY PAY A HEFTY FEE TO KILL YOU THEMSELVES.

BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN I CAN'T GET WHAT'S MINE FIRST!

TRSH!
HERE'S THE SKINNY. YOU TOOK MY EYE. SO, I WANT YOURS.
COVER GIRL, IF YOU WANT TO LIVE, YOU'LL DO THE HONORS FOR ME.
BARONESS, IF YOU WANT TO BE HANDED OVER TO MY BUYERS INTACT...YOU'LL KILL COVER GIRL!
ЕРУНДА!
YOU JUST WANT TO MESS WITH US. YOU'LL KILL HER ANYWAY AND THEN SELL ME OFF.
JUST GET IT OVER WITH ALREADY.

NOW WHY YOU GOTTA GO AND RUIN MY FUN, BARONESS?
THIS COULD BE A LOT WORSE.
SEE... RAPTOR WAS SPYING ON YOU AT THE CAFÉ...
HE OVER-HEARD YOU AND COVER GIRL TALKING ABOUT YOUR PARENTS. HE SAW THEM. WHICH MEANS...
"HE CAN FIND THEM."
IF YOU DON'T DO WHAT I'M TELLING YOU TO DO...
I'LL SEND THE ORDER TO MY FINE FEATHERED FRIEND...TO KILL YOUR MA AND PA.
REALLY, IT'S A WIN-WIN FOR ME. AND A LOSE-LOSE FOR YOU.
HOW ABOUT THIS?
STOP BEING SUCH A @#$%, AND TRY TO TAKE OUT MY EYE YOURSELF.

YOU WERE RIGHT, BARONESS.
I SHOULD BE MORE LIKE YOU.

STRAIGHT SHOOTERS

DIRECT ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO: GIJOE@SKYBOUND.COM

WHOA! What a wild, cliffhanger ending! I'll bet y'all didn't see THAT coming! Welcome to the next installment of Straight Shooters--I'm your co-host, Ben, and joining me once more is the sinister scribe behind that ending--Joshua Williamson!

Hopefully our newest heel turn is a fun surprise! But there are more twists and turns to come! And as you saw here we tease our connections to the TRANSFORMERS series, all these plots and subplots will continue to build until they collide and explode!

All right, crew, let's check out some letters!

G.I. Joe & Transformers Team--

All I can say is this year's FCBD Special was pure joy!! Especially bc it picked up right on the heels of G.I. Joe #6's great cliffhanger. Clutch & Hound together was just pitch perfect but then you throw in M.A.S.K. from out of nowhere?! Best comic surprise in a long time. Your comics put a smile on my face every month--keep up the great work!

Best,
Joe Cannon
Bay Area, CA

Thanks for picking up our annual SPECIAL, Joe! I'm THRILLED to have Matt Trakker in the fold and I gotta say, we planned it SO well to have Andrea Milana draw that story and then roll right the next G.I. Joe arc... and he's absolutely KILLING it!

Yeah, Andrea is the best! Very excited for you to see these upcoming issues.

Also, I'm glad you liked that it went from #6 right into the ENERGON SPECIAL. We want to make sure everything flows and not a single issue is wasted. So we make sure the issues always have a fun surprise for our faithful readers...and this time that meant M.A.S.K.!

Yo, Joe and Energon Universe Comic Creators,

Longtime fan here, since '82 for GI Joe and '84 for Transformers, and I am loving the Energon Universe so far, including Void Rivals as well, obviously.

Just saw your next cover with Flint and Beach Head and I can only hope they have their famous "Chain of command" conversation from "Arise, Serpentor, Arise!" pt 1.

There are so many fantastic Joe characters, and I'd love you guys to focus on some more obscure ones, perhaps in "Special Missions" type team situations.

It'd be great to see an issue with the HALO jumpers, like Ripcord, Crazylegs, and Hit n' Run. Or Blowtorch and Charbroil team up as the resident flamethrowers (with Barbecue there just in case). An arctic tale would be easy with Frostbite, Iceberg, Blizzard, and Snowjob. The animal handlers could also use a spotlight; how often have we seen Law & Order or Mutt & Junkyard working with Spearhead & Max? We can leave Deep Six and his Dolphin out of it, but he can team up with Torpedo and WetS.

I've always thought a dramatic issue about explosives detection would be neat, with Lightfoot and Tripwire taking the lead, maybe with Tunnel Rat as a consultant.

Short one-offs like Airtight vs a Toxoviper or Breaker vs a Televiper might be fun.

And since you have Void Rivals and Transformers, we can send the Joes into SPAAAACE! Using Star Brigade (maybe leave out the Lunartix Empire) and possibly Star Viper in his Stellar Stiletto, the Joes & Cobras could cross over with Void Rivals and meet our fave triplechanger 'Bot & 'Con buddies Sandstorm & Octane, out there tooling around in their spaceship reading Playbot magazine just like in the cartoon.

And if we're pulling from the animated series, I'd seriously love to see references to Lady Jaye and Destro's familial relationship from "Skeletons in the Closet" and the Lovecraftian Cthulu-like monster below Castle Destro in "Sins of Our Fathers."

Shipwreck was a total rockstar on the show, and his star turn in "Memories of Mara" and of course "There's No Place Like Springfield" stuck with me forever. Ditto for the multiversal tale "Worlds Without End" where Cobra won the war. Dusty shines in "The Traitor" and there are no lack of M.A.S.S. Devices, Weather Dominators, or Pyramids of Darkness in any of the 5-parters.

Obviously, I enjoy the grounded Joe comics too, and I've been reading Larry Hama from the beginning and to this day, but the show has so many perfectly wacky comic book elements baked into it. You've already perfectly adapted Cobra-La (let's hear it for more Pythona) so I figure the whole show is fair game, even The Viper, who will absolutely come to vipe your vindows.

Take care and keep up the stellar work. Yo Joe!

Mike Marano
Toronto, Canada

I love your passion, Mike, and the roll call of characters--some fun ideas! Who knows what the future holds...

Love the way you think! That is a lot of awesomeness. Trust me...we've said this before, but I want to do it all. I want to bring in all of my favs. But we want to make sure all the characters are introduced in the best way possible. That's why we started some of the Nightforce spotlight issues with a Beach Head solo story. We'll have a few of those over the years.

I'm a big fan of the structure of those 5-part cartoon minis and looked at the math of those as I put together the first story arc. It was a great way to showcase the team in different locations and challenges, and I'm really proud of how we did that in the first arc, so expect more of that from our future issues.

Joe Team,

I usually don't write into letter columns but I enjoyed issue 7 so much that I felt the need to do so. Beach Head has always been a favorite and his personality and skills were dead on in this issue. Add in Night Force with Flint and Lady Jaye, Major Bludd trying to draw out the Baroness with a team of Night Creepers, and Colonel Hawk, who keeps his cards close to the vest, and you get a lot of revelations in one issue. I do prefer Cover Girl as a heavy vehicle mechanic as opposed to being an administrative aide but it seems that she will be fleshed out in the next issue.

I am still awaiting for the appearance of Snake Eyes but I don't want it rushed since his reveal must be epic. Thanks for all the thought you put into this universe.

Kurt

Thanks for writing in, Kurt!

We will be showing more and more of Cover Girl's skills with tanks. You can see from this issue we have a lot planned for her.

#7 was one of my fav issues to write, so I'm glad a fellow Beach Head fan enjoyed it so much! These "Nightforce Missions" issues are key to the series and the subplots that we're building. So, yeah expect a lot of big moves in each of them.

Straight Shooters,

First. I want to congratulate you on an amazing first story arc. Issues 1 through 6 were well done, a great story line, beautiful art. I cannot wait for more.

Second. Issue 7. Beach Head. I loved my favorite Joe getting the focus for a solid issue. I loved it in the last Silent Mission series in April, and this one was just as fantastic. I enjoyed hearing his inner monologue. The tie backs to his original file card. "Numbskulls" and "Ma'ams" made me chuckle. I especially enjoyed the fact that he was trying to prove to himself that he still had it and shouldn't have to go train recruits. The story was well paced starting slow and picking up speed throughout. I also appreciated the appearance of the Sky Hawk.

In the letters section of issue 7 it mentioned that there would be issues that 'would be fillers, but wouldn't feel like fillers'. I read the fine print of that. So, we should expect a G.I. Joe: Night Force mini-series? I am guessing that means we'll see rotations between Andrea Milana and Tom Reilly between the main and the future mini-series? Do those guys even need time off? Maybe even just a Beach Head mini-series? We need more of those anyway. A second Scarlett mini-series. A Major Bludd series. The list is endless and as my kid would say 'you guys are fire' (or slaying it? I think I'm doing it wrong).

Keep up the great work!
Jeremy B
Tampa

I can't WAIT for more Beach Head and Night Force...stay tuned, Jeremy, and thanks for reading!

Another Beach Head fan! I'm glad you caught those small pieces of "Numbskulls and Ma'ams" as I really had Beach Head's voice in my head while I wrote that issue. He was always one of my favorites and I wanted to make sure that I got him right.

I can't speak to any future spin-offs as that would spoil some of our plans. HOWEVER...like Ben said...KEEP READING.

And that's a wrap, folks! Keep the letters coming and I'm pretty sure we'll blow your minds next month, heh heh...

-Ben

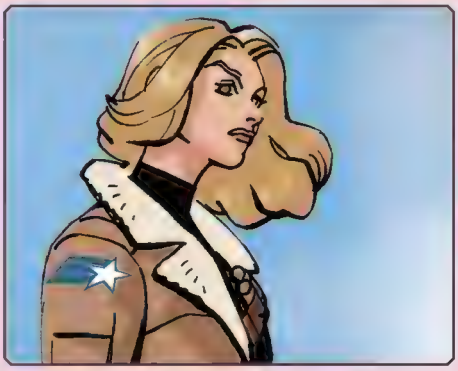
YES, THANK YOU FOR WRITING IN. These letters are a highlight of working on G.I. JOE in the Energon Universe. It's great feedback and inspiring. And yeah, next month is another wild issue.

-Josh

ENERGON EXPERIENCE

The Energon crew—including some new additions—recently convened to chart the future of these titles into 2026 and beyond. Don't worry, Josh and Tom aren't going anywhere after the upcoming "Dreadnok War", but do keep an eye on Cobra Commander AND Night Force, as its roster continues to grow... but why?

-SEAN MACKIEWICZ, PUBLISHER



CHARACTER SPOTLIGHT

WHO: Courtney Krieger, Codename: Cover Girl

WHERE: Cover Girl was tasked with keeping an eye on The Baroness while in Paris...but things went sideways before they could even order breakfast!

WHAT: Look at that last page again. You know EXACTLY what.

LANCE PREFERS BLONDES

How many eagle-eyed readers remember that Cover Girl started with auburn hair waaay back in DUKE #5? Why did she go blonde?

In case you missed G.I. JOE #1, it was all thanks to Clutch!

CREATOR SPOTLIGHT

Andrea Milana, if you were a member of G.I. JOE, what would your codename be?

Andrea: I've thought about it a bit, and I think I'll go with Sinistro. It's the opposite of Destro and means both left-handed (as I am) and sinister (well, I like horror).

THE ENERGON UNIVERSE CHECKLIST

- ☐ TRANSFORMERS #22 AVAILABLE 7/9
- ☐ G.I. JOE #9 AVAILABLE 7/16
- ☐ VOID RIVALS #21 AVAILABLE 7/23

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For fans of *Battle Chasers* and *The Moon is Folllowing Us*, the Must Read Action Epic
from LUDO LULLABI and ADRIANO LUCAS

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- ROBERT KIRKMAN *(INVINCIBLE, VOID RIVALS)*

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JAMES TYNION IV AND DANI
UNIVERSAL
MONSTERS
THE INVISIBLE MAN
OUT OF SIGHT... OUT OF HIS MIND!
ISSUE #1 APPEARS AUGUST 2025
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